

Mildenhall College Academy
The Hub, Sheldrick Way, Mildenhall, Suffolk. IP28 7JX
Tel: 01638 714645
Email: MCA-reception@ATTrust.org.uk

Principal: Mr J Oxley BSc (Hons) PgDL NPQH



Mildenhall College
A C A D E M Y

Re: Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Local School Calendar's for Mildenhall College Academy, Beck Row Academy and Great Heath Academy

I am writing to invite your views as part of a formal consultation on proposed changes to the local school calendar introducing a two week October half term break from October 2026.

This consultation will run for **two weeks**, during which we welcome feedback from parents, carers, students, staff and members of our wider community before any final decisions are made.

These changes are being explored to support student learning and attendance, staff development and overall wellbeing across our community.

In proposing this alteration we have considered the impact on the local community and that is why we have decided to approach this proposal as a group of 3 local academies.

Why We Are Proposing This Change for the Half Term Break

Our intention is to design a structure that is sustainable, promotes high-quality education, and supports both student and staff well-being. A two-week October break would support:

- improved student attendance in the second half of the Autumn term
- better placing of learning and assessment
- reduced illness and staff absence during a period that is nationally one of the highest for school-related fatigue

Despite the extension to the half term break, curriculum time across the academic year would remain fully protected through minimal amendments to the daily timings.

Compliance With DfE Requirements

The Department for Education requires schools to offer at least 32.5 hours per week. Primary schools also provide wrap-around care. The proposed model in all academies continues to meet — and exceed — this requirement.

Proposed Changes to the Academy Day at MCA

We are also investigating the potential to adjust the length and structure of the academy day.

- We are looking to increase the length of the working day by approximately 15 minutes with a finish time of approximately 1540-1545
- We are proposing to introduce 5 one-hour lessons as part of a re-designed timetable
- We are proposing to introduce a shorter Wednesday each week with an earlier finish time of 1440.

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Why We Are Proposing This Change at MCA

Our intention is to design a structure that is sustainable, promotes high-quality education, and supports both student and staff wellbeing. The proposed adjustments would allow us to:

1. Enhance Teaching Quality and Consistency

- A shorter Wednesday would provide time for staff training, collaborative planning and professional development.
- Improved staff training contributes directly to stronger teaching, higher-quality lessons and better outcomes across all year groups.
- Time for subject teams to work together helps ensure that our curriculum remains highly sequenced, coherent and ambitious.

2. Improve Student Wellbeing and Engagement

- A shorter Wednesday supports mental wellbeing by breaking up the week and giving students dedicated time for independent study and homework completion.
- We can offer a selection of clubs and activities at an earlier time of the day.

3. Align Timings More Effectively With Transport Providers

- Extending the day on four days of the week ensures we maintain curriculum time while aligning with bus schedules.
- This helps avoid delays at the end of the day and supports smooth, safe travel for all students.

4. Improve Lesson Quality Through Potential Shorter, More Frequent Lessons

- Feedback from students and staff indicates that concentration can fade during longer lessons.
- Exploring a move to more, shorter sessions may enhance focus, pace and retention for many learners, including those with SEND.

Development of the New MCA Day Structure

A staff working party will begin work on potential models, guided by consultation feedback. Areas under consideration include:

- A revised start time of **08:55**
- A finish time of **15:40–15:45**
- The number and length of lessons each day

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- The placement of Morning Meeting, break time and lunch

We are committed to incorporating the views of parents, carers, pupils and staff throughout this process.

How to Share Your Views

Academy Transformation Trust welcomes your views on this proposal, and you can engage in the following ways:

Email: consultations@attrust.org.uk with the appropriate subject header: MCA/Beck Row/Great Heath

In writing: Karen Robson, Academy Transformation Trust, Unit 4, Second Floor, Emmanuel Court, Reddicroft, Sutton Coldfield, B73 6AZ

Consultation Timeline

Consultation launch Monday 20th April

Consultation Closes Tuesday 5th May 10:00am

Decision Monday 11th May

Communicate to stakeholders Thursday 21st May

Website and Calendar updated (if required) Friday 22nd May

Thank you for your ongoing support and for taking the time to contribute to this important discussion. We remain committed to working in partnership with families to secure the very best outcomes for our young people.

Yours sincerely,

Mr James Oxley

Principal

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